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**BEFORE THE  
PHYSICAL THERAPY BOARD OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS  
STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

In the Matter of the Accusation Against:

Case No. 1D-2005-64252

RICHARD SCOTT WRIGHT, P.T.  
969 Sugarbush Drive  
Vista, CA 92084

**A C C U S A T I O N**

Physical Therapist  
License No. PT9924

Respondent.

Complainant alleges:

PARTIES

1. Steven K. Hartzell (Complainant) brings this Accusation solely in his official capacity as the Executive Officer of the Physical Therapy Board of California, Department of Consumer Affairs.

2. On or about September 12, 1980, the Physical Therapy Board of California issued Physical Therapist License No. PT9924 to RICHARD SCOTT WRIGHT, P.T. (Respondent). The Physical Therapist License was in full force and effect at all times relevant to the charges brought herein and will expire on October 31, 2007, unless renewed.

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JURISDICTION

3. This Accusation is brought before the Physical Therapy Board of California (Board), Department of Consumer Affairs, under the authority of the following laws. All section references are to the Business and Professions Code unless otherwise indicated.

4. Section 2609 of the Code states:

“The board shall issue, suspend, and revoke licenses and approvals to practice physical therapy as provided in this chapter.”

5. Section 2620 of the Code states:

“Physical Therapy means the art and science of physical or corrective rehabilitation or of physical or corrective treatment of any bodily or mental condition of any person by the use of the physical, chemical, and other properties of heat, light, water, electricity, sound, massage, and active, passive, and resistive exercise, and shall include physical therapy evaluation, treatment planning, instruction and consultative services. The practice of physical therapy includes the promotion and maintenance of physical fitness to enhance the bodily movement related health and wellness of individuals through the use of physical therapy interventions. The use of roentgen rays and radioactive materials, for diagnostic and therapeutic purposes, and the use of electricity for surgical purposes, including cauterization, are not authorized under the term ‘physical therapy’ as used in this chapter, and a license issued pursuant to this chapter does not authorize the diagnosis of disease.

6. Section 2620.7 of the Code states, in pertinent part:

“(a) A physical therapist shall document his or her evaluation, goals, treatment plan, and summary of treatment in the patient record.

“(b) A physical therapist shall document the care actually provided to a patient in the patient record. . . .”

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1           7.       Section 2660 of the Code states:

2           “The board may, after the conduct of appropriate proceedings under the  
3       Administrative Procedure Act, suspend for not more than 12 months, or revoke, or  
4       impose probationary conditions upon any license, certificate, or approval issued  
5       under this chapter for unprofessional conduct that includes, but is not limited to,  
6       one or any combination of the following causes:

7           “ . . .

8           “(h) Gross negligence in his...practice as a physical therapist...

9           “(i) Conviction of a violation of any of the provisions of this chapter or of  
10       the State Medical Practice Act, or violating, or attempting to violate, directly or  
11       indirectly, or assisting in or abetting the violating of, or conspiring to violate any  
12       provision or term of this chapter or of the State Medical Practice Act.

13          “ . . .

14          “(l) The commission of any fraudulent, dishonest, or corrupt act which is  
15       substantially related to the qualifications, functions, or duties of a physical  
16       therapist or physical therapy assistant.

17          “ . . .

18          “(n) The commission of verbal abuse or sexual harassment.”

19       8.       Section 726 of the Code states, in pertinent part:

20       “The commission of any act of sexual abuse, misconduct, or relations with  
21       a patient, client, or customer constitutes unprofessional conduct and grounds for  
22       disciplinary action for any person licensed under this division, under any initiative  
23       act referred to in this division and under Chapter 17 (commencing with Section  
24       9000) of Division 3.”

25       “...”

26       9.       Section 2660.1 of the Code states in pertinent part a patient “is  
27       conclusively presumed to be incapable of giving free, full, and informed consent to any sexual  
28       activity which is a violation of Section 726.”

1                   10.     Section 2266 of the Code states:  
2                   “The failure of a physician and surgeon to maintain adequate and accurate records  
3 relating to the provision of services to their patients constitutes unprofessional  
4 conduct.”  
5                   11.     Section 2263 of the Code states:  
6                   “The willful, unauthorized violation of professional confidence constitutes  
7 unprofessional conduct.”  
8                   12.     California Code of Regulations, Title 16, Section 1399.20, states, in  
9 pertinent part:  
10                  “For the purposes of denial, suspension or revocation of a license, pursuant to  
11 Division 1.5 (commencing with Section 475) of the code, a crime or act shall be  
12 considered to be substantially related to the qualifications, functions or duties of a person  
13 holding a license under the Physical Therapy Practice Act if to a substantial degree it  
14 evidences present or potential unfitness of a person to perform the functions authorized  
15 by the license or approval in a manner consistent with the public health, safety or welfare.  
16 Such crimes or acts shall include but not be limited to the following:  
17                  “(a) Violating or attempting to violate, directly or indirectly, or assisting in or  
18 abetting the violation of, or conspiring to violate any provision or term of the Physical  
19 Therapy Practice Act.  
20                  “...  
21                  “(c) Violating or attempting to violate any provision or term of the Medical  
22 Practice Act.”  
23                  ///  
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27                  ///  
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1 **COST RECOVERY**

2 13. Section 2661.5 of the Code states, in pertinent part:

3 “In any order issued in resolution of a disciplinary proceeding before the  
4 board, the board may request the administrative law judge to direct any licensee  
5 found guilty of unprofessional conduct to pay to the board a sum not to exceed the  
6 actual and reasonable costs of the investigation and prosecution of the case.”

7 “...”

8 **FIRST CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE**

9 **(Sexual Misconduct)**

10 14. Respondent is subject to disciplinary action under Code sections 726,  
11 2660 (l), and 2660.1, in that he committed sexual misconduct and corrupt acts in his care and  
12 treatment of patient S.D. as follows:

13 A. On or about September 9, 2003, patient S.D., a 43-year-old  
14 female, began physical therapy treatment with Respondent. She had been referred  
15 to Respondent by her dental hygienist. Respondent agreed to take cash payments  
16 of \$35.00 per visit for treating patient S.D.

17 B. Respondent began treating patient S.D. without having a  
18 prescription or order for treatment.

19 C. Respondent also failed to obtain a medical diagnosis prior to  
20 treatment; and failed to perform an evaluation and history on her.

21 D. In or about January 2004, patient S.D. sensed that  
22 Respondent started to have significant feelings for her as he spent more time with  
23 her. They started to discuss their marriages and the differences between men and  
24 women. Respondent began to treat patient S.D. for longer and longer periods of  
25 time, often for close to two hours, and often over the lunch hour when no staff nor  
26 patients were present in the office.

27 E. Respondent hugged and kissed patient S.D. during numerous  
28 office visits. These actions were observed by Respondent’s employees.

1 F. In or about March 2004, Respondent kissed the back of  
2 patient S.D.'s hand while he was working on her shoulder. She told him, "No."

3 G. In or about April 2004, Respondent asked patient S.D. to go  
4 to lunch or dinner after one of her treatments. On or about April 4 or 6, 2004,  
5 Respondent kissed patient S.D. on the lips.

6 H. Respondent's employees observed patient S.D. bring her  
7 own blanket to the treatment sessions and observed Respondent working on  
8 patient S.D.'s body with his hands under the blanket. No other patients brought  
9 their own blankets.

10 I. In or about May 2004, Respondent again kissed patient  
11 S.D. while she was lying on the treatment table. Patient S.D. told Respondent that  
12 her husband was a jealous man and very possessive. After this kiss, Respondent  
13 did not pursue patient S.D. again.

14 J. Patient S.D.'s last office visit was on May 19, 2004.  
15 However, there is no notation for this visit in the chart. On this last visit,  
16 Respondent's wife entered the treatment room while Respondent was treating  
17 patient S.D. and began arguing with Respondent. Respondent's employees had  
18 called Respondent's wife about the relationship between Respondent and patient  
19 S.D. That evening, Respondent's wife called patient S.D. at her home threatening  
20 patient S.D., stating that Respondent had admitted to having an affair with patient  
21 S.D. and stating she was going to report the matter to the church elders.

22 Respondent's Interview:

23 K. On August 31, 2005, Respondent was interviewed in the  
24 Field Office. During the interview, Respondent made several admissions.

25 L. Respondent admitted he was treating patient S.D. without  
26 having an order, a referral, a prescription or a diagnosis from any other medical  
27 practitioner.

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1 M. Respondent admitted to kissing patient S.D. during several  
2 treatment sessions.

3 N. Respondent admitted to having “fallen in love” with patient S.D.

4 O. Respondent admitted discussing his marriage with patient S.D.

5 P. Respondent admitted that even though patient S.D. had  
6 expressed not wanting to get into a relationship, he ignored her wishes and  
7 pursued her further.

8 Q. Respondent admitted that he had not documented all of his  
9 care and treatment of patient S.D.

10 15. Respondent has committed acts or omissions constituting sexual abuse and  
11 misconduct in violation of Section 726 and corrupt acts in violation of Section 2660, during the  
12 care and treatment of patient S.D., in that:

13 A. Respondent crossed professional boundaries in his  
14 treatment of patient S.D.

15 B. Respondent inappropriately hugged and kissed patient S.D.

16 C. Respondent inappropriately discussed his marriage with S.D.

17 D. Respondent inappropriately discussed S.D.’s marriage with her.

18 E. Respondent admitted to “falling in love” with patient S.D.  
19 yet he still continued to treat her.

20 **SECOND CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE**

21 **(Sexual Harassment)**

22 16. Respondent is further subject to disciplinary action in that he committed  
23 sexual harassment in violation of Section 2660 (n) during his care and treatment of patient S.D.  
24 The circumstances are as follows:

25 A. Paragraphs 14 and 15, above, are incorporated by reference as if  
26 realleged in their entirety herein.

27 B. Despite patient S.D. informing Respondent his advances were  
28 unwelcome, Respondent still continued to pursue her.

1 C. Respondent made repeated attempts to touch patient S.D. in  
2 inappropriate ways.

3 D. Respondent repeatedly made sexually inappropriate comments to  
4 patient S.D. indicating his desire to become personally involved with her.

5 **THIRD CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE**

6 **(Unprofessional Conduct)**

7 17. Respondent is further subject to disciplinary action for unprofessional  
8 conduct violation of Section 2660 during his care and treatment of patient S.D. Paragraphs 14  
9 through 16, inclusive, are incorporated by reference as if realleged in their entirety herein.

10 **FOURTH CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE**

11 **(Gross Negligence)**

12 18. Respondent is further subject to disciplinary action in that he committed  
13 gross negligence in violation of Sections 2660 (h) and 2660 (i) during his care and treatment of  
14 patient S.D. as follows:

15 A. Paragraphs 14 through 16, inclusive, are incorporated by reference  
16 as if realleged in their entirety herein.

17 B. Respondent committed multiple acts of sexual abuse and  
18 misconduct with patient S.D.

19 C. Respondent admitted to falling in love with patient S.D. yet he still  
20 continued to provide physical therapy to her as a patient.

21 D. Respondent's wife entering the treatment session between  
22 Respondent and patient S.D. and being present thereafter violated the patient's right to  
23 privacy.

24 E. Respondent's employees advising Respondent's wife of  
25 information  
26 pertaining to patient S.D. violated the patient's right to privacy.

27 F. Respondent treated patient S.D. without having an order, a referral,  
28 a prescription or a diagnosis from any other medical practitioner.



- 1 G. Respondent failed to obtain a medical diagnosis prior to  
2 treatment.
- 3 H. Respondent failed to obtain copies of patient S.D.'s prior medical  
4 records.
- 5 I. Respondent failed to obtain or take x-rays of patient S.D.
- 6 J. Respondent failed to perform, or record performing, an evaluation  
7 and history on patient S.D.

8 **SIXTH CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE**

9 **(Failure to Maintain Adequate and Accurate Records)**

10 19. Respondent is further subject to disciplinary action on account of his  
11 failure to maintain adequate and accurate records, in his treatment of patient S.D., in violation of  
12 Business and Professions Code sections 2266 and 2620.7, in that he failed to document all of his  
13 treatment sessions with, and treatment provided to, patient S.D.

14 **SEVENTH CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE**

15 **(Violation of Professional Confidence)**

16 20. Respondent is further subject to disciplinary action for violating the  
17 patient's confidence by discussing the patient with his wife and by his employees advising  
18 Respondent's wife of information pertaining to patient S.D., in violation of Business and  
19 Professions Code section 2263, as more fully alleged in paragraphs 14 through 18, inclusive,  
20 which are incorporated by reference as if realleged in their entirety herein.

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1 **PRAYER**

2 WHEREFORE, Complainant requests that a hearing be held on the matters herein  
3 alleged, and that following the hearing, the Physical Therapy Board of California issue a  
4 decision:

5 1. Revoking or suspending Physical Therapist License Number PT9924,  
6 issued to Richard Scott Wright, P.T.;

7 2. Ordering Richard Scott Wright, P.T. to pay the Physical Therapy Board of  
8 California the reasonable costs of the investigation and enforcement of this case, pursuant to  
9 Business and Professions Code section 2661.5;

10 3. Taking such other and further action as deemed necessary and proper.

11 DATED: May 23, 2006

12  
13 Original Signed By:  
14 STEVEN K. HARTZELL  
15 Executive Officer  
16 Physical Therapy Board of California  
Department of Consumer Affairs  
State of California  
Complainant

17 Wright Accusation.wpd  
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